

This Troilus, with blisse of that supprysed,
Put al in Goddes hond, as he that mente
Nothing but wel; and, sodeynly avysed,
He hir in armes faste to him hente.
And Pandarus, with a ful good entente,
Leyde him to slepe, and seyde: If ye ben wyse,
Swowneth not now, lest more folk aryse.

What mighte or may the sely larke seye,
Whan that the sparhawk bath it in his foot?
I can no more, but of this ilke tweye,
To whom this tale sucre be or soot,
Though that I tarie a yeer, somtyme I moot,
After myn auctor, tellen hir gladnesse,
As wel as I have told hir hevinesse.

Criseyde, which that felte hir thus ytake,
As writen clerkes in hir bokes olde,
Right as an aspes leef she gan to quake,
Whan she him felte hir in his armes folde.
But Troilus, al hool of cares colde,
Gan thanken tho the blisful goddes sevene;
Thus sondry peynes bringen folk to hevene.

This Troilus in armes gan hir streyne,
And seyde: O swete, as ever mote I goon,
Now be ye caught, now is ther but we tweyne;
Now yeldeth yow, for other boot is noon.
To that Criseyde answerde thus anon:
Ne hadde I er now, my swete herte dere,
Ben yolde, ywis, I were now not here!

O! sooth is seyde, that heled for to be
As of a fevre or othere greet syknesse,
Men moste drinke, as men may often see,
ful bittre drink; and for to han gladnesse,
Men drinken often peyne and greet distresse;
I mene it here, as for this aventure,
That thourgh a peyne hath founden al his cure.

And now swetnesse semeth more swete,
That bitternesse assayed was biforn;
for out of wo in blisse now they flete.
Non swich they felten, sith they were born;
Now is this bet, than bothe two be lorn!
for love of God, take every womman hede
To werken thus, if it comth to the nede.

Criseyde, al quit from every drede and tene,
As she that juste cause hadde him to triste,
Made him swich feste, it joye was to sene,
Whan she his trouthe and clene entente wiste.
And as aboute a tree, with many a twiste,
Bitrent and wryth the sote wode binde,
Gan eche of hem in armes other winde.

And as the newe abaysshed nightingale,
That stinteth first whan she biginneth singe,
Whan that she hereth any herde tale,
Or in the hegges any wight steringe,
And after siker dooth hir voys outringe;
Right so Criseyde, whan hir drede stente,
Opned hir herte, and tolde him hir entente.

And right as he that seeth his deeth yshapen,
And deye moot, in ought that he may gesse,
And sodeynly rescous doth him escapen,
for al this world, in swich present sikernesse,
Was Troilus, and hath his lady swete;
With worse hap God lat us never mete!

Hir armes smale, hir streyghte bak and softe,
Hir sydes longe, fleschly, smothe, and whyte
He gan to stroke, and good thrift bad ful ofte
Hir snowish throte, hir brestes rounde and lyte;
Thus in this hevne he gan him to delyte,
And therewithal a thousand tyme hir kiste;
That, what to done, for joye unmethe he wiste.

Than seyde he thus: O, Love, O, Charitee,
Thy moder eek, Citherea the swete,
After thyself next heried be she,
Venus mene I, the welwilly planete;
And next that, Imeneus, I thee grete;
for never man was to yow goddes holde
As I, which ye han brought fro cares colde.

Benigne Love, thou holy bond of thinges,
Whoso wol grace, and list thee nought honoure,
Lo, his desyr wol flee withouten winges,
for, noldestow of bountee hem socoure,
That serven best and most alwey laboure,
Yet were al lost, that dar I wel seyn, certes,
But if thy grace passed our desertes.

And for thou me, that coude leest deserve
Of hem that nombred been unto thy grace,
Hast holpen, ther I lykly was to sterve,
And me bistowed in so heygh a place
That thilke boundes may no blisse pace,
I can no more, but laude and reverence
Be to thy bounte and thyn excellence!

And therewithal Criseyde anon he kiste,
Of which, certeyn, she felte no disese.
And thus seyde he: Now wolde God I wiste,
Myn herte swete, how I yow mighte plesse!
What man, quod he, was ever thus at ese
As I, on whiche the faireste and the beste
That ever I say, deyneth hir herte reste.

Here may men seen that mercy passeth right;
The experience of that is felt in me,
That am unworthy to so swete a wight.
But herte myn, of your benignitee,
So thenketh, though that I unworthy be,
Yet mot I nede amenden in som wyse,
Right thourgh the vertu of your heyghthe servyse.

And for the love of God, my lady dere,
Sin God hath wrought me for I shal yow serve,
As thus I mene, that ye wol be my sterve,
To do me live, if that yow liste, or sterve,
So techeth me how that I may deserve
Your thank, so that I, thurgh myn ignoraunce,
Ne do nothing that yow be displeaunce.

for certes, fresshe wommanliche wyf,
This dar I seye, that trouthe and diligence,
That shal ye finden in me al my lyf,
Ne I wol not, certeyn, breken your defence;
And if I do, present or in absence,
For love of God, lat slee me with the dede,
If that it lyke unto your womanhede.

Ywis, quod she, myn owne hertes list,
My ground of ese, and al myn herte dere,
Graunt mercy, for on that is al my trist;
But late us falle away fro this matere;
for it suffyseth, this that seyde is here.
And at o word, withouten repentaunce,
Welcome, my knight, my pees, my suffisaunce!

Of hir delyt, or joyes oon the leste
Were impossible to my wit to seye;
But juggeth, ye that han ben at the feste
Of swich gladnesse, if that hem liste pleye!
I can no more, but thus thise ilke tweye
That night, betwixen dreed and sikernesse,
felten in love the grete worthinesse.

O blisful night, of hem so longe ysought,
How blithe unto hem bothe two thou were!
Whyne hadde I swich on with my soule ybought,
Ye, or the leeste joye that was there?
Away, thou foule daunger and thou fere,
And lat hem in this hevne blisse dwelle,
That is so heygh, that al ne can I telle!

But sooth is, though I can not tellen al,
As can myn auctor, of his excellence,
Yet have I seyde, and, God to for, I shal
In every thing al hoolly his sentence.
And if that I, at loves reverence,
Have any word in ech for the beste,
Doth therewithal right as yourselven leste.

for myne wordes, here and every part,
I speke hem alle under correccioun
Of yow, that feling han in loves art,
And putte it al in your discrecioun
To encrese or maken diminucioun
Of my langage, and that I yow biseche;
But now to purpos of my rather speche.

Thise ilke two, that ben in armes laft,
So looth to hem asonder goon it were,
That ech from other wende been biraft,
Or elles, lo, this was hir moste fere,
That al this thing but nyce dremes were;
for which ful ofte ech of hem seyde: O swete,
Clippe ich yow thus, or elles I it mete?

And, Lord! so he gan goodly on hir see,
That never his look ne bleynte from hir face,
And seyde: O dere herte, may it be
That it be sooth, that ye ben in this place?
Ye, herte myn, God thank I of his grace!
Quod tho Criseyde, and therewithal him kiste,
That where his spirit was, for joye he niste.

This Troilus ful ofte hir eyen two
Gan for to kisse, and seyde: O eyen clere,
It were ye that wroughte me swich wo,
Ye humble nettes of my lady dere!
Though ther be mercy writen in your chere,
God wot, the text ful hard is, sooth, to finde,
How coude ye withouten bond me binde?

Therwith he gan hir faste in armes take,
And wel an hundred tymes gan he syke,
Nought swiche sorwful sykes as men make
for wo, or elles whan that folk ben syke,
But esy sykes, swiche as been to lyke,
That shewed his affeccioun withinne;
Of swiche sykes coude he nought bilinne.

Sone after this they speke of sondry thinges,
As fil to purpos of this aventure,
And playinge entrechaungen hir ringes,
Of which I can nought tellen no scripture;
But wel I woot a broche, gold and asure,
In whiche a ruby set was lyk an herte,
Criseyde him yaf, and stak it on his sherte.

Lord! trowe ye, a covetous, a wrecche,
That blameth love and holt of it despyt,
That, of tho pens that he can mokre and keche,
Was ever yet yveve him swich delyt,
As is in love, in oo poynt, in som plyt?
Nay, doutelees, for also God me save,
So parfit joye may no nigard have!

They wol sey Yis, but Lord! so that they lye,
Tho bisy wrecches, ful of wo and drede!
They callen love a woodnesse or folye,
But it shal falle hem as I shal yow rede;
They shul forgo the whyte and eek the rede,
And live in wo, ther God yeve hem mischaunce,
And every lover in his trouthe avaunce!

As wolde God, tho wrecches, that dispyse
Seryyse of love, hadde eres also longe
As hadde Myda, ful of covetyse;
And therto dronken hadde as hoot and stronge
As Crassus dide for his affectis wronge,
To techen hem that they ben in the vyce,
And lovers nought, although they holde hem nyce!

Thise ilke two, of whom that I yow seye,
Whan that hir hertes wel assured were,
Tho gonne they to speken and to pleye,
And eek rehercen how, and whanne, and where,
They knewe hem first, and every wo and fere
That passed was; but al swich hevinesse,
I thanke it God, was tourned to gladnesse.

And evermo, whan that hem fel to speke
Of any thing of swich a tyme agoon,
With kissing al that tale sholde breke,
And fallen in a newe joye anon,
And didnen al hir might, sin they were oon,
for to recoveren blisse and been at ese,
And passed wo with joye coudrepeyse.